MAR.
NO. 22

10¢

BLONDE PHANTOM

COMICS

SLAM!
IS THAT YOU, TOAD? DID YA DROP THE BLONDE PHANTOM IN THAT CEMENT MIXER LIKE I TOLD YA TO?
WELL, EH, I TOOK HER THERE ALL RIGHT... BUT WE HAD A, EH, CHANGE OF PLAN!
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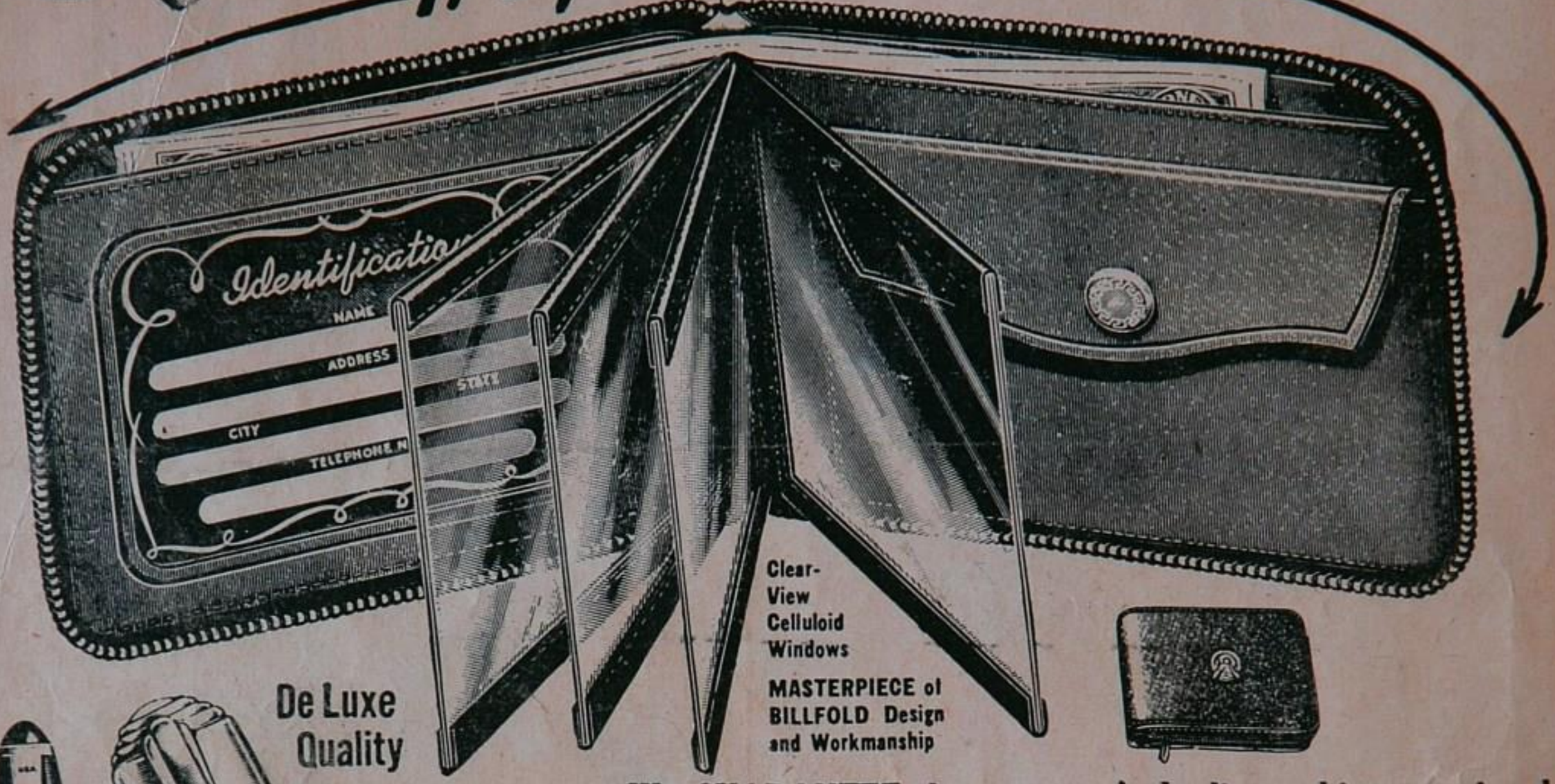

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BLONDE PHANTOM

I MUST GET AWAY FROM THE "MOLE" AND HIS GANG OR THE OUTER WORLD IS *DOOMED!*

GET THE *BLONDE PHANTOM!* SHE MUST NOT ESCAPE TO THE EARTH'S SURFACE!

I'LL GET HER, "MOLE"! SHE'LL NEVER GET OUT ALIVE! HA! HA!

"TRAPPED UNDER THE EARTH!"

WHO WAS THE MOLE? WHAT HAPPENED WHEN THE LARGEST PRISON IN THE WORLD DISAPPEARED INTO THE EARTH? WHO WERE THE MONSTROUS BEINGS OF THE UNDERWORLD? THE *BLONDE PHANTOM* FACES DESPERATE JAIL-BIRDS AND UNKNOWN HORROR AT THE EARTH'S CORE!

4544

THIS, THE MOST AMAZING, FANTASTIC STORY OF THE BLONDE PHANTOM'S CAREER, ALL BEGAN WHEN MARK MASON, DETECTIVE, RAN INTO HIS OFFICE IN A FIT OF EXCITEMENT AND BARKED AN ORDER TO LOUISE GRANT, HIS SECRETARY!

LOUISE! LOUISE! PUT A NOTICE IN THE PAPER TELLING THE BLONDE PHANTOM TO GET IN TOUCH WITH ME IMMEDIATELY!

WHAT'S WRONG, MARK?

WHAT'S *WRONG? GOOD GRIEF!* THE MOST TERRIFYING MYSTERY EVER TO FACE THE POLICE, AND *YOU* ASK ME WHAT'S *WRONG!*

AND SO, A FEW HOURS LATER...

WELL, I GUESS I'LL SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT NOW!

AILY ★ S

IEAG TATLL' ST-L

BLONDE PHANTOM SEE MARK MASON AT ONCE-- URGENT!

IT WOULD HAVE SAVED A LOT OF TIME IF MARK HAD TOLD ME WHAT WAS WRONG WHEN I ASKED HIM AS LOUISE GRANT..

A QUICK CHANGE OF COSTUME, AND THE EFFICIENT SECRETARY BECOMES THE WORLD'S MOST GLAMOROUS CRIMEFIGHTER!

...BUT IF HE'D RATHER WAIT TO TELL THE BLONDE PHANTOM, IT'S OKAY WITH ME!

HELLO, MARK! I SAW YOUR NOTICE IN THE PAPER -- WHAT'S THE TROUBLE?

BLONDE PHANTOM! AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU! I'LL EXPLAIN QUICKLY, EVERY SECOND COUNTS!

BANG!

"YOU REMEMBER THE MOLE -- THE MOST DANGEROUS CRIMINAL IN THE WORLD WHO WAS JUST CAPTURED LAST WEEK?"

"YES, WHAT ABOUT HIM?"

"HE WAS TAKEN TO PENAL PRISON -- THE LARGEST, MOST CLOSELY GUARDED PRISON IN THE WORLD!"

"WELL, WHAT'S HAPPENED? HAS HE ESCAPED?"

"HE DID MORE THAN JUST ESCAPE -- HE TOOK THE ENTIRE PRISON WITH HIM! A FEW HOURS AGO I RECEIVED WORD THAT THE PENAL PRISON HAD DISAPPEARED FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH!"

"IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!"

UNBELIEVABLE OR **NOT**, WE'VE GOT TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THAT PRISON! IT CONTAINED MORE THAN 5,000 OF THE NATION'S MOST **DANGEROUS KILLERS!** IF THE MOLE HAS **FREED** THEM SOMEHOW...

WELL, WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR ?

A FEW MINUTES LATER, AT THE SITE OF THE PENAL PRISON...

HERE'S THE SPOT! SEE--IT'S VANISHED COMPLETELY!

HELLO, INSPECTOR SMITH!

HELLO, BLONDE PHANTOM! HOPE **YOU** CAN MAKE SOME SENSE OUT OF WHAT'S HAPPENED HERE-- **WE** CAN'T!

MARK, DID YOU EVER HAVE THE FEELING THAT SOMEONE YOU COULDN'T SEE WAS WATCHING YOU? WELL, I HAVE THAT FEELING NOW!

IT'S PROBABLY JUST YOUR IMAGINATION!

NO, MARK, IT ISN'T JUST THE BLONDE PHANTOM'S IMAGINATION -- FOR FAR, FAR UNDERGROUND, MANY PAIRS OF VICIOUS EYES ARE WATCHING...

HEH! HEH! LOOK AT HER, THE FOOL! THEY CALL HER THE WORLD'S GREATEST CRIME-FIGHTER -- WAIT TILL THEY SEE **HER** VANISH, THE WAY OUR PRISON DID! HEH! HEH! HEH!

ARE YA GONNA BRING **HER** DOWN HERE, TOO, MOLE ?

YES, I'LL BRING HER HERE! SHE SEEMS ANXIOUS TO LEARN WHERE WE ARE, SO THE GENTLEMANLY THING TO DO IS TO **SHOW** HER! HEH! HEH! FIRST, LET ME ADJUST MY ELECTRONIC GRAVITY CONTROL!

HAW! HAW! REMEMBER WHEN THOSE PRISON GUARDS THOUGHT THAT WAS SOME KIND OF A WRIST WATCH YOU WERE WEARING? HAW! HAW!

AND SO, SECONDS LATER, AT THE SITE OF THE PRISON AGAIN...

MARK, I SUSPECT THAT--**MARK!** SOMETHING IS TUGGING AT ME! **MARK! HELP** ME--I'M--I'M BEING **DRAGGED DOWN...**

BLONDE PHANTOM! WHAT IS IT ? **WHAT'S WRONG?**

BLONDE PH--! **SHE'S VANISHED!** RIGHT INTO THE EARTH!

HHHH

I MUST BE SEEING THINGS! BLONDE PHANTOM--WHERE ARE YOU? ANSWER ME!

MASON, WHAT'S WRONG? WHERE'S THE BLONDE PHANTOM? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

MEANWHILE, THE MOLE RECEIVES A GORGEOUS GUEST...

WELCOME, BLONDE PHANTOM, TO THE LAIR OF THE MOLE!

YA DID IT, MOLE--YA *DID* IT!

WH-WHERE AM I? HOW DID I GET HERE?

SURE, I DON'T MIND EXPLAINING IT TO YOU! YOU'LL NEVER LEAVE US TO TELL ANYONE--HEH! HEH! SIT DOWN!--I SAID, *SIT DOWN!*

YOU HEARD HIM--*SIT DOWN!*

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD HOW I GOT THE NAME "MOLE"--IT WAS BECAUSE I HAVE ALWAYS SPENT MOST OF MY TIME UNDERGROUND, EXPLORING! THAT'S HOW I FOUND MY ELECTRONIC GRAVITY CONTROL...

YOUR *WHAT?*

...THIS IS IT! I FIGURE IT WAS LEFT IN A CAVE UNDERGROUND BY A PREHISTORIC RACE THAT USED TO LIVE UNDER THE EARTH! THIS GIMMICK CAN MAKE *ME* THE *MASTER* OF *GRAVITY!*

THE MASTER OF GRAVITY? --HOW?

SEE THIS CHART I DREW? YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS A TREMENDOUS PULL OF GRAVITY IN THE CENTER OF THE EARTH WHICH KEEPS PEOPLE FROM FALLING OFF THE PLANET--IT'S LIKE A HUGE MAGNET DOWN AT THE EARTH'S CORE!

THAT'S RIGHT! WHAT ABOUT IT?

I DISCOVERED THAT THIS ELECTRONIC GRAVITY CONTROL WAS CAPABLE OF INCREASING THE PULL OF GRAVITY WHEREVER IT WAS AIMED--SO ANYBODY, OR ANYTHING, THAT I AIMED THIS AT, COULD BE *PULLED DOWN HERE!*

GOOD HEAVENS! AND *WHERE* IS *"HERE"?*

WHERE IS "HERE"? HEH! HEH! HEH! YOUNG LADY, YOU ARE NOW STANDING IN THE ***EXACT CENTER OF THE EARTH --4,000 MILES DOWN!*** HERE THE PULL OF GRAVITY IS SO STRONG THAT YOU'LL ***NEVER*** GET BACK TO THE SURFACE WITHOUT MY HELP! HEH! HEH! HEH!

ONLY BY SWITCHING THIS GRAVITY CONTROL TO REVERSE, AND POINTING IT AT SOMEONE, CAN HE BE BROUGHT TO THE SURFACE! NOW-- ***TAKE HER AWAY!***

REVERSE

WH-WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH ME?-- AND WITH YOUR GRAVITY CONTROL DEVICE?

I HAVEN'T MADE UP MY MIND YET-- BUT WHEN I DO-- HEH! HEH! I'LL LET YOU KNOW!

MEANWHILE, BACK ON THE SURFACE, MARK MASON HAS A ROUGH TIME WITH THE INSPECTOR...

I TELL YOU, INSPECTOR, SHE ***SANK INTO THE GROUND,*** AS IF A ***HUGE MAGNET*** HAD PULLED HER DOWN!

TALK SENSE, MASON-- TALK SENSE! WAS SHE KIDNAPED-- OR DID SHE RUN OFF TO TRACK DOWN SOME CLUE?

I TELL YOU, INSPECTOR, SHE ***VANISHED--RIGHT THROUGH THE GROUND!--*** ***HERE!***

MASON, YOU'RE CRACKING UP! WHAT YOU NEED IS A LONG VACATION!

WHILE 4,000 MILES UNDER THE FEET OF THE INSPECTOR AND MARK MASON, THE MAD PLANS OF A MASTER CRIMINAL ARE BEING DISCUSSED...

DO YOU MEN REALIZE THAT WE CAN PROJECT OURSELVES TO THE SURFACE, COMMIT CRIMES, AND THEN VANISH DOWN HERE TO HIDE OUT -- WHERE WE COULD ***NEVER*** BE CAUGHT? THIS COULD OUR OWN, LITTLE ***UNDERGROUND KINGDOM OF CRIME...***

DAT'S ***GREAT,*** MOLE!

...AS THE BLONDE PHANTOM STRUGGLES VALIANTLY IN THE FACE OF ALMOST HOPELESS DEFEAT!

...AND I, THE MOLE, WILL BE THE ***KING*** OF MY CRIME KINGDOM!

ONE OF THESE STRANDS IS LOOSE-- JUST A LITTLE MORE TUGGING, AND I SHOULD BE ABLE TO BREAK THESE KNOTS!

BUT SUDDENLY, FROM BEHIND THE STARTLED OUTLAWS, A SONOROUS VOICE LASHES OUT!

NO! SURFACE CREATURE -- THERE WILL BE NO KINGDOM OF CRIME HERE AT THE CORE OF THE EARTH! WE WILL NOT ALLOW IT!

WH--? WHO'S THAT?

I AM SHAG, KING OF THE UNDERGROUND EMPIRE! I ORDER YOU ALL BACK TO THE SURFACE BEFORE I DESTROY YOU!

HAW! WHAT A CREEP! YOU DESTROY US? WHAT A LAUGH! TELL US WHAT YOU'RE DOIN' DOWN HERE BEFORE I HAVE ONE OF MY BOYS SHOOT YOU A SLUG!

FOOL! BULLETS CANNOT HARM ME! THEY COULD NEVER PENETRATE MY MATTED HIDE! AS FOR YOUR "BOYS" -- THEY ARE BUT A HANDFUL TO THE MILLIONS OF SUBJECTS AT MY COMMAND!

"FOR CENTURIES YOUR PEOPLE HAVE WONDERED WHAT BECAME OF THE KINGDOM OF ATLANTIS -- WELL, MY PEOPLE ARE DESCENDANTS OF THAT WONDERFUL ISLAND OF ANCIENT TIME!"

"AT THE TIME OF THE GREAT TIDAL WAVE, MANY THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, OUR SCIENTISTS WERE READY FOR THE CALAMITY! THEY HAD PERFECTED A GRAVITY CONTROL WHICH COULD MOVE ALL OUR PEOPLE HUNDREDS OF MILES UNDERGROUND TO SAFETY FROM THE ELEMENTS!"

"MOST OF THE CITIZENS OF ATLANTIS WERE SAVED FROM DESTRUCTION BY THIS WONDERFUL INVENTION..."

"WE ATLANTIANS BUILT A GREAT LAND UNDERGROUND, AND AS THE CENTURIES ROLLED BY, WE GREW TALL AND SHAGGY, AND OUR EYES BECAME WEAK FROM LACK OF LIGHT -- UNTIL WE ARE AS YOU NOW SEE ME..."

"BUT WE HAD LONG AGO DECIDED THAT WE WANTED NONE OF THE WARS, OR TIDAL WAVES, OR CRIMES, OR ILLNESSES OF THE SURFACE WORLD! ONE OF OUR ANCIENT KINGS DECREED THAT NO ATLANTIAN COULD EVER VISIT THE SURFACE --AND NO SURFACE CREATURE COULD REMAIN IN ATLANTIS!"

IT IS TOO BAD YOU ACCIDENTALLY DISCOVERED OUR GRAVITY CONTROL-- NOW I MUST *DESTROY* YOU *ALL!*

NO! NO! WE'LL DO ANYTHING YOU SAY! WE'LL RETURN TO THE SURFACE IMMEDIATELY-- BUT *LET US LIVE--PLEASE!*

VERY WELL! YOU MAY RETURN TO THE SURFACE AND YOU SHALL TAKE ME WITH YOU -- TO GIVE MY MESSAGE TO YOUR FELLOW SURFACE MEN!

OKAY, RIGHT AWAY-- THANK YOU! AS SOON AS I ADJUST THESE CONTROLS-- THERE...

REVERSE

AND SO, SOME SECONDS LATER, BACK ON THE SURFACE...

I TELL YOU, MASON, IF YOU DON'T STOP TALKING ABOUT THE BLONDE PHANTOM VANISHING FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH, I'LL...

INSPECTOR! LOOK!

RRRR ROAR!

WE'RE ALL GIVING OURSELVES UP-- BUT I DISCOVERED A CREATURE FROM *ANOTHER WORLD!* A SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY LIKE THIS SHOULD ENTITLE US ALL TO OUR *FREEDOM* AS A *REWARD!*

HOLY SMOKE! WHAT IS IT?

DON'T BE ALARMED, GENTLEMEN, IT'S ONLY ME-- FORMERLY SHAG, KING OF THE UNDERGROUND EMPIRE--BY VIRTUE OF TWO WOODEN PLANKS I USED FOR STILTS AND SOME UNTWISTED ROPE STUCK TO MY COSTUME!

WE'VE BEEN *TRICKED!* IT'S THE *BLONDE PHANTOM!*

WHERE *IS* THAT GRAVITY CONTROL GADGET, BLONDE PHANTOM? OUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD HAVE IT!

NO! *NO* GOVERNMENT SHOULD HAVE IT-- IT'S TOO DANGEROUS! I DESTROYED IT AS SOON AS WE SURFACED!

YOU KNOW, THE MOLE'S STORY ABOUT AN UNDERGROUND KINGDOM MAY REALLY HAVE BEEN TRUE BECAUSE *SOMEONE* SURELY LOST THAT GRAVITY CONTROL!

NOTE: THE STORY YOU HAVE JUST READ WAS TOLD TO THE EDITOR OF THIS MAGAZINE BY A VERY TALL, SHAGGY-LOOKING MAN! HIS EYES WERE CONCEALD BY DARK GLASSES, AND HE WAS MOSTLY COVERED UP BY A HUGE COAT! HE CLAIMED TO HAVE BEEN THE MEMBER OF THE UNDERGROUND EMPIRE WHO HAD BEEN SENT TO THE SURFACE AS PUNISHMENT FOR LOSING A SECRET GRAVITY CONTROL INSTRUMENT! PERHAPS HIS STORY WAS TRUE -- PERHAPS IT WAS A HOAX TO MAKE US BUY THE SCRIPT! AT ANY RATE, WE PRINTED IT AS HE TOLD IT -- AND YOU, DEAR READER, MAY JUDGE FOR YOURSELF!

!

THE END

BLONDE PHANTOM

IN "JACKPOT OF DEATH!"

AND NOW FOR OUR NEXT QUESTION, SIR! "WHO WAS THE MAN KNOWN AS *PUBLIC ENEMY NO 1*"?

I'LL ANSWER THAT QUESTION! PUBLIC ENEMY NO. 1 IS *"BROW" BENSON* -- YOUR CONTESTANT THERE!

BLONDE PHANTOM! YOU'VE RUINED MY GAME BUT I'LL FIX YOU -- FOR GOOD!

WHAT WAS THE JACKPOT QUESTION? WHO WAS THE CONTESTANT WHOSE POCKET BULGED WITH A LETHAL GUN? THUS BEGAN A QUIZ PROGRAM FOR THE *BLONDE PHANTOM* THAT LEFT *ONE QUESTION* UNANSWERED!

3528

WITH THAT $25,000 COLD CASH LAYING AROUND, THE *PULP'S BREAKFAST FOOD* COMPANY WANTS ME TO COVER THEIR *QUIZ PROGRAM* TOMORROW NIGHT... JUST IN CASE! WOULD YOU CARE TO GO WITH ME, LOUISE?

WHY, I'D *LOVE* TO, MARK!

IN MARK MASON'S PRIVATE OFFICE...

THE NEXT EVENING, AT THE BROADCASTING STUDIO...

GOOD EVENING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! WELCOME TO THE PULP'S BREAKFAST FOOD QUIZ CONTEST PROGRAM...

MEANWHILE, BEHIND THE SCENE IN THE BROADCASTING STUDIO'S OFFICES...

SAY! WHAT'S THE *MEANING* OF THIS?

REACH, BUSTER... AND BUTTON UP!

FORK OVER THAT *DUPLICATE* SHEET OF *QUESTIONS* TO TONIGHT'S QUIZ PROGRAM!

QUIZ CONTEST ROOM — KEEP OUT

WE PULLED *FOUR* JOBS THIS WEEK AT A GRAND TOTAL OF *FIFTY BUCKS!*

YEAH! WHO EVER SAID CRIME DOESN'T PAY WAS *RIGHT!* I'M AS FLAT AS A FRESH-PRESSED PAIR OF PANTS!

HEY, CROSSWELL! HOW DO I LOOK? PRETTY SHARP, EH? JUST LIKE A PROFESSOR, HUH?

STOP ADMIRING YOURSELF AND LET'S GET THIS *ANSWER SHEET* DOWN TO THE "BROW" BEFORE THE SHOW STARTS!

THE "BROW" WAS SLICK TO WORK OUT A DEAL AS SMOOTH AS *THIS!*

NUTS! "BROW" CAN'T EVEN ANSWER THE *PHONE*, LET ALONE WIN A *QUIZ PROGRAM!*

QUIZ CONTEST ROOM — KEEP OUT

...AND IN ANOTHER PART OF THE STUDIO, THE QUIZ PROGRAM GOES ON!

THAT'S STRANGE... CONTESTANT NUMBER ELEVEN LOOKS *FAMILIAR... WHERE* HAVE I *SEEN HIM BEFORE?*

SECONDS LATER...

THAT MAN'S HANDING HIM A PAPER! I WONDER WHAT IT IS!

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE WORD... "QUINQUAGESIMA"?

WH...THAT IS... A TERM USED TO DESCRIBE A PERSON WHO IS FIFTY YEARS OLD!

HE'S GOT THE ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ QUESTIONS! I SAW HIM TAKE A QUICK GLANCE AT THE PAPER BEFORE HE ANSWERED! HMMM... NOW I REMEMBER WHERE I SAW HIM BEFORE...

...IN A POLICE LINE-UP! HE'S ***BROW BENSON!***

SUDDENLY, LOUISE REMEMBERS!

SOMETHING'S UP! ***"BROW" BENSON*** COULDN'T PASS A ***KINDERGARTEN*** EXAM... LET ALONE REACH THE FINALS IN A ***QUIZ CONTEST!***

I HAVE A TERRIBLE HEADACHE, MARK! WILL YOU EXCUSE ME, WHILE I GO TO THE POWDER ROOM?

IN THE POWDER ROOM...

THIS OUGHT TO DO THE TRICK!

DURING THE BAND NUMBER, THE BLONDE PHANTOM SLIPS THE ANNOUNCER A NOTE!

NOW FOR THE FIREWORKS!

HERE WE GO, FOLKS! READY FOR THE ***SECOND*** AND ***FINAL*** ROUND OF OUR QUIZ SHOW?

IT'S YOUR TURN ***AGAIN***, NUMBER ELEVEN! WHICH IS LARGER... TWO PLUS TWO, OR TWO MULTIPLIED BY TWO? NO HELP FROM THE AUDIENCE, ***PLEASE!***

AH... ER, LEMME SEE NOW... DAT'S A TOUGH QUESTION!

AS THE SECONDS TICK BY...

SORRY...TIMES UP! ***BOTH*** EQUAL FOUR! EVEN A CHILD KNOWS THAT, MISTER BENSON! THAT IS YOUR REAL NAME, ISN'T IT?

WHAT'S IT TO YOU? BESIDES, ***THAT*** WASN'T THE QUESTION YOU WERE ***SUPPOSED*** TO ***ASK ME!***

WHAT AM I SAYING?

THIEF! ROBBER! CROOK! YOU'RE RUNNING A CROOKED QUIZ SHOW! YOU ***TRICKED*** ME! I'VE BEEN ***FRAMED!***

MISTER BENSON! ***PLEASE!*** WE'RE ON THE AIR!

CONFUSED BY WHAT HAS OCCURRED, THE STUPID "BROW" REVERTS TO TYPE!

NEVER MIND THAT, WISE GUY! ***HAND OVER THAT DOUGH,*** ON THE ***DOUBLE!***

THE BLONDE PHANTOM GOES INTO ACTION...

KLUNK!

NEVER TURN YOUR BACK ON A LADY, "BROW"... IT'S *NOT POLITE!*

NOW'S OUR CHANCE TO SCRAM WITH THE LOOT!

I PICKED *THIS* STUNT UP FROM READING *COMIC BOOKS!*

EXIT

YOW!

WELL, GENTLEMEN...YOU HAD THE ANSWERS TO ALL THE QUESTIONS EXCEPT THE *JACKPOT* QUESTION!

YOU HAD THE ANSWER TO *THAT*, BLONDE PHANTOM! THE ANSWER IS..."CRIME DOESN'T PAY!"

A FEW MINUTES LATER...

MARK! WHAT HAPPENED?

YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE! WHAT A *SHOW* THIS TURNED OUT TO BE! THE *BLONDE PHANTOM* WAS HERE AND TURNED THE *QUIZ SHOW* INTO A "LET'S PLAY DETECTIVE" THRILLER!

LATER, AS MARK MASON AND LOUISE LEAVE THE RADIO STATION...

THAT BLONDE PHANTOM IS *TERRIFIC,* LOUISE! HOW IS IT THAT SHE'S ALWAYS ON THE SPOT TO HELP ME WHEN TROUBLE OCCURS?

THAT'S THE $64 QUESTION, MARK!

THE END

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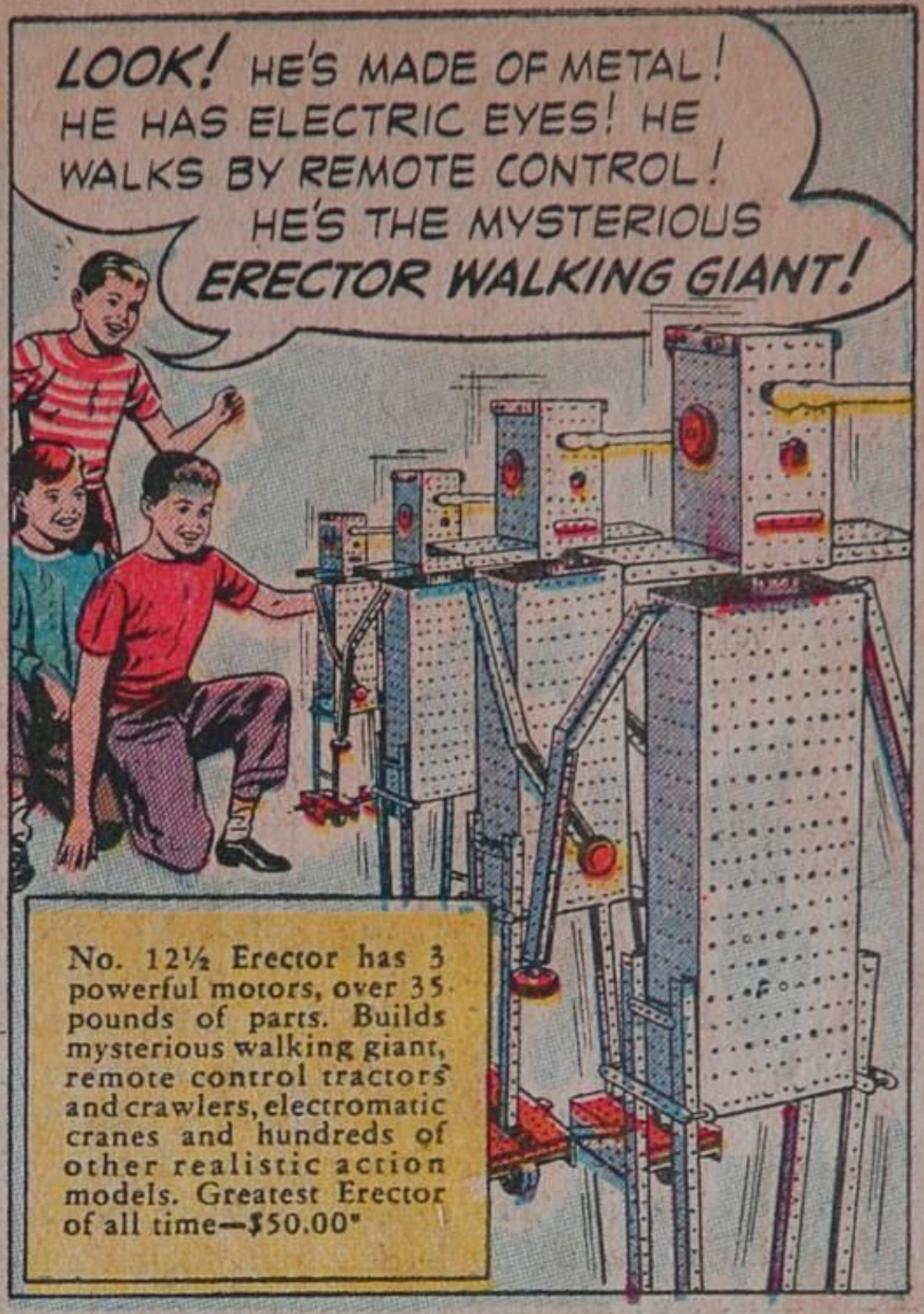

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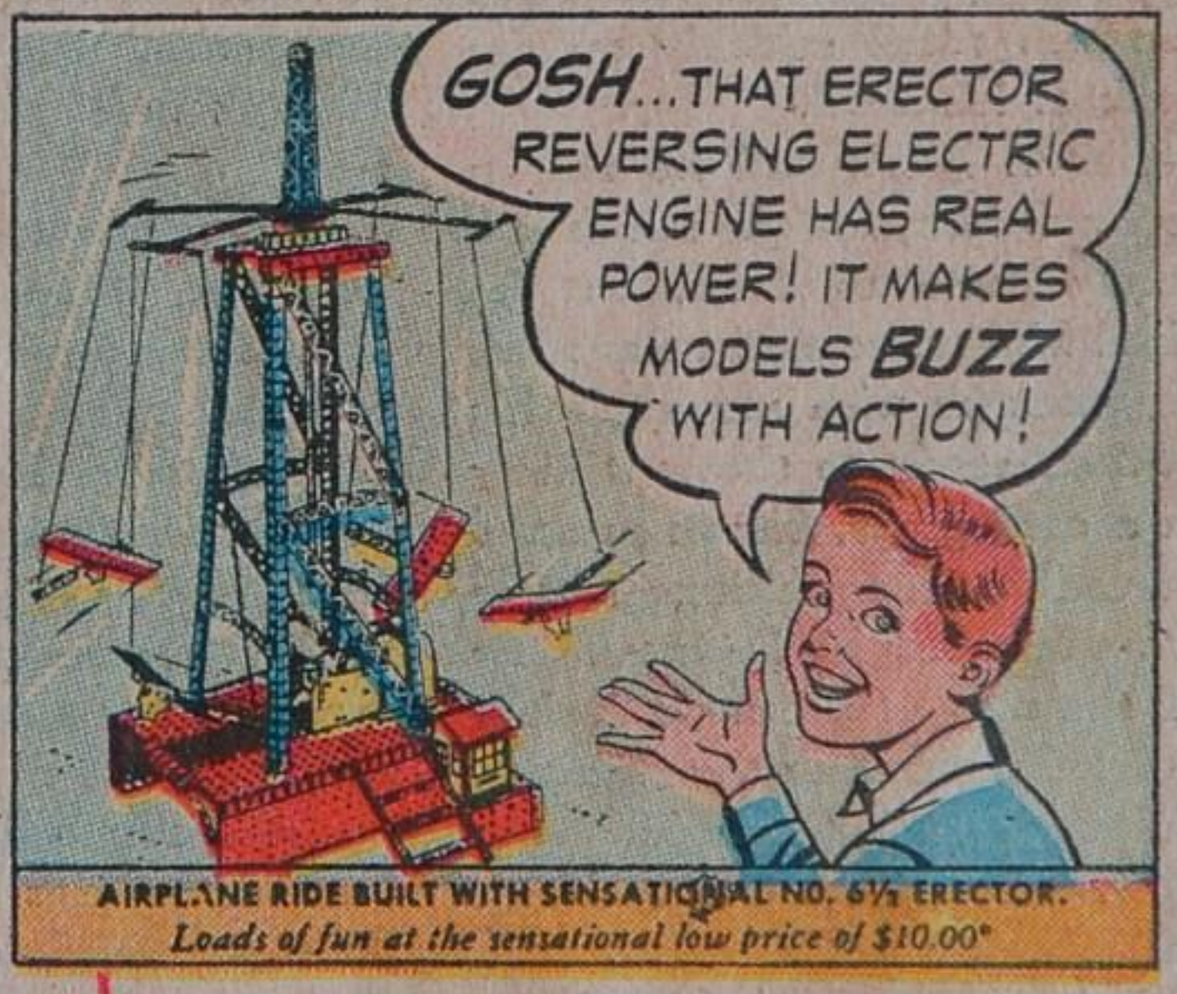

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THE BLUFF

HAD NOT SIMON BLACK been so intent upon studying the face of the man seated opposite him to determine the cards he held in his hand, he would have noticed the sudden hush that fell upon the gaming room of the Hotel Paradise. The stranger that came through the swinging doors was a tall fellow, lean as a desert cat, with a friendly face that seemed to smile at everyone at once.

His faded blue jeans and alkali-stained shirt told of a hard ride across the prairie, and the purpose of that ride was written in his eyes. Two guns hung at his sides, riding back on his hips, and his ten-gallon hat was tilted rakishly on the back of his head.

Simon Black had no reason to know him, for the tall fellow rarely came to town, but he sized him up at once as another cowpuncher with money in his pockets ready to throw it away in a card game. Simon grinned inwardly, for taking money from men was his business. One of the men at the table looked up and nodded to the stranger. "Howdy, Buck," he said.

"Evening, Tex. Got room at the table for me?"

Before anyone could answer, Simon pulled a chair forward and slid it into place. "Sure, cowboy, have a seat. We're having a nice friendly game of poker here—if you have money to back up your play."

Buck looked at the black-frocked gambler, noting that his garb was as dismal as his name. He noticed, too, the bulge of the guns under Simon's long coat. "I have money," he said softly. From his pocket he drew a leather pouch and threw it on the table. It thudded heavily with the weight of the gold it contained. Simon's eyes devoured it greedily, knowing that soon it would be his, one way or another.

Generally a big money game drew a host of interested spectators, but this time the occupants of the room seemed more concerned with avoiding the table. Nevertheless, they listened avidly to hear every spoken word, ready to jump the minute trouble threatened. They knew it would come, too.

When the first hand was dealt out, Simon gave the newcomer to the game a closer look. "You new around these parts, friend? Haven't seen you in town before."

Buck never looked up when he spoke, "Nope, I'm not new. Been around quite a while, but too busy to stop by here much. It used to be I'd just drop in and get my grub, never come in here."

"No?" Simon threw out a few cards. "How come you're here now?"

Somebody coughed nervously. One of the men looked a little pale and withdrew from the game. By now Simon was aware something was wrong, and for a second his hand hovered near his gun—not that he was worried, for he knew well enough that nobody in the state could beat him to the draw.

Buck played a card, then another man withdrew. Suddenly the two were alone at the table. Buck said, "I came to town looking for a man. When I find him, I'm going to shoot the critter."

"And who is this man?" Simon asked as he flicked out the cards.

"A professional gambler name of Black. He shot my partner a few months ago. Nearly killed him."

Simon's hand froze momentarily, then he relaxed and smiled, not worried the slightest, for all this had happened before, and he always won. "Too bad," he said.

"Yeah, shore is," Buck told him. "When they brought Billy in, he was nearly gone, but now he's up and around, though he'll never be the same. You know, this used to be a pretty nice town before this here Black feller moved in. He scared half the decent people off and keeps the ranch hands hereabouts cleaned of their pay. He likes to shoot people, too, I understand."

"So I hear," Simon remarked sarcastically. He dealt out another hand.

"Yep, supposed to be the fastest gun-waddy around, but I propose to do something about that. You know, feller, I used to be quite a hand with a gun myself. That was back five years or so and I was living in another state. Got in a little trouble over there and had to clear out. Ever hear of Dakota Eddie?"

Simon's eyebrows knitted. "Yeah, I heard of him. He's the toughest man this side of the border that ever tangled with a posse. They don't come any tougher than him."

"He was a fast man, too," Buck said, "and he had plenty of notches on his gun. One day I called him, and he tried to put a notch on for me, but

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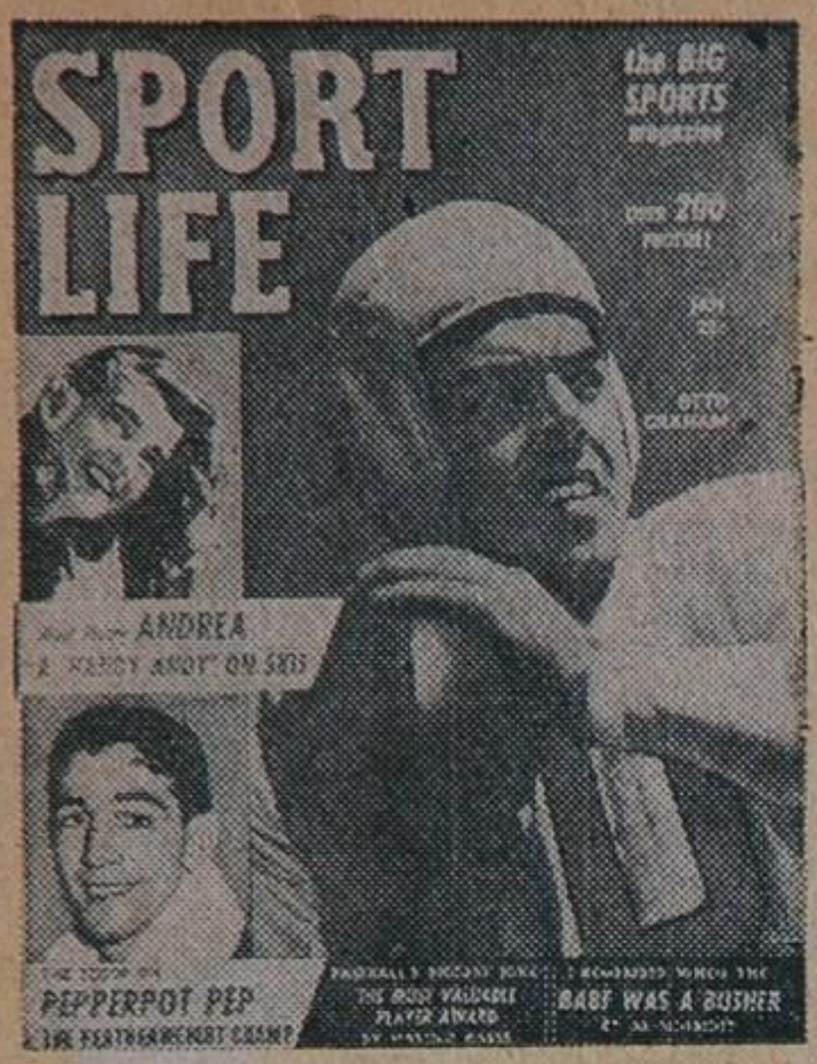

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failed. I put two slugs in him before he could clear his holster. That's why I had to leave."

Licking his lips nervously, Simon said, "You . . . you mean you're the one that . . . W-why, Dakota Eddie was one of the fastest men on the draw . . ."

"*Was* is right. Reminds me of this Simon Black feller I'm after right now. What I want to do is to make him show his hand. I'll give him plenty of time to draw, then I'm going to blast him every which way. For a whole month now I've done nothing but practice the quick draw and fire, just to make sure my eye is still good, and it's perfect. It's funny, but after the fight with Dakota Eddie I put my guns up; now I find that I'm faster than ever!"

Buck threw his hand down, then saw that he had beaten his opponent. He drew in his winnings, then said, "Say, maybe you know where I can find this Black feller. Do you?"

Simon was pale; his hands shook. He wanted no part of anyone who outdrew Dakota Eddie. He licked his lips nervously and muttered, "N-no. Sorry, never heard of him. Guess you win this game; I've gotta go. Tonight I'm leaving for the border." He rose quickly, his eyes on Buck, then made a dash for the door, hoping no one would call his name.

For a long minute there was absolute silence in the room. From outside came the drumming of a horse; then the sound faded in the distance. Only then did the men swarm around Buck. One slapped his shoulder. "Buck, you're plumb crazy! Why, when you came in here, we expected you to get carried out!"

Buck grinned. "Well, he'll never come back, that's a sure thing. Maybe now this'll go on being a nice quiet town."

"Just the same, that was some chance you took. Why, in all the time I knowed you, never once did I see you with a gun. I've even seen you jump like a cat when one went off near you. And that story about you getting Dakota Eddie . . . it was a lulu!"

"Maybe so, but I had to do something. After all, I can't let my partner get shot up without getting rid of the guy that done it. That gambler has been a trouble spot in this town ever since he showed up, cheating everybody out of their cash and making them like it. When he picked on my partner and almost killed him, I decided that it was about time somebody did something. Well, gotta get back to the ranch now, fellers. Good night!" He waved and left.

After Buck had gone, the men had a big laugh, thinking of how a gun-shy cowboy could run off a tough hombre like Simon Black. Just then Old Mac, who ran the general store and post office, said softly, "You know, Buck came to these parts about five years ago at that."

The laughing stopped. ". . . And in case you never noticed, he gets letters regularly from the town where he used to live . . . in Dakota!"

One of the men said, "Say, do you mean that maybe . . ."

Old Mac cut in with, "I'm just a-wondering . . . what would have happened if Simon Black called him instead of running off like a yellow dog. Well, guess that's something we'll never know!"

THE END SL—3976

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946

of Blonde Phantom Comics published Bimonthly at Meriden, Conn., for October 1, 1948.

State of New York } ss.
County of New York }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State, and county aforesaid, personally appeared Robert Solomon, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the Blonde Phantom Comics and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily, weekly, semiweekly or triweekly newspaper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations), printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1 That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Medallion Publishing Corp., 350 5th Avenue New York 1, N Y.; Editor, Stan Lee, 350 5th Avenue New York 1, N. Y.; Managing Editor, Martin Goodman, 350 5th Avenue New York 1, N Y; Business Manager, Robert Solomon, 350 5th Avenue, New York 1 N Y

2 That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.)

Medallion Publishing Corp., 350 5th Avenue, New York 1, N Y., Martin Goodman, 350 5th Avenue, New York 1, N. Y.; Jean Goodman, 350 5th Avenue, New York 1, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.)

None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5 That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the twelve months preceding the date shown above is ..... (This information is required from daily, weekly, semiweekly, and triweekly newspapers only.)

(Signed) ROBERT SOLOMON.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 9th day of September, 1948.

(SEAL) SYLVIA FIEGEN.

(My commission expires March 30, 1949.)

SUB-MARINER

"DEATH LURKS IN THE POOL!"

4527

THERE WAS A STRANGE TRAP AT THE BOTTOM OF THE POOL WHICH ONLY THE SUB-MARINER COULD DESTROY... FOR THE TRAP WAS SET FOR *HIM!*

IT ALL STARTS IN A RATHER MILD MANNER ONE BRIGHT DAY ON THE BEACH IN THE MOST FAMOUS PLAY-SPOT OF THE WORLD, CONEY ISLAND--! MILD, DID WE SAY? WELL, JUDGE FOR YOURSELF...

HALP!

OUR FRIEND, SUB-MARINER, WHO HAS BEEN SERVING AS AN HONORARY LIFEGUARD, LOOKS DOWN FROM HIS PERCH TO ASK...

HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON DOWN THERE? WHAT'S ALL THE YELLING ABOUT?

I DON'T KNOW! THERE'S A GUY DOWN HERE WHO JUST STANDS AND HOLLERS "HELP"! YOU'D BETTER TALK TO HIM, SUB-MARINER!

LIFE GUARD

HELP!

ALL RIGHT, PAL! WHAT IS IT?

HELP! OH! IT'S *YOU*, NAMOR! THANK GOODNESS! YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN HELP ME--THE *ONLY* ONE!

BUT WHAT'S THE STORY, MISTER..?

SQUIDD'S THE NAME, NAMOR! SH-SH-SH! COME WITH ME!

YOU SEE, I OPERATE ONE OF THE POOLS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BOARDWALK! NOW, YOU WON'T BELIEVE THIS, BUT THERE'S SOME KIND OF A *TRAP* IN THE BOTTOM OF MY POOL! SWIMMERS HAVE BEEN CAUGHT IN IT! IT'S *DANGEROUS*, I TELL YOU! *TERRIBLE!*

HMMM!

SQUIDD TAKES NAMOR TO THE POOL WHICH IS STILL FILLED!

WHY DON'T YOU DRAIN THE WATER AND SEE WHAT'S WRONG DOWN THERE?

I *CAN'T*, NAMOR! THE PUMPS ARE STUCK, TOO! TERRIBLE! *TERRIBLE!*

I'M LOSING MONEY BY THE MINUTE! PLEASE, NAMOR, YOU'RE A GREAT SWIMMER! WON'T YOU GO DOWN AND FIND OUT WHAT THE TROUBLE IS?

ALL RIGHT, SQUIDD, THIS INTRIGUES ME! HERE I GO!

FILLING HIS POWERFUL LUNGS WITH AIR, NAMOR PLUNGES INTO THE WATER TO INVESTIGATE THE SECRET OF THE TRAP IN THE POOL!

BUT AS SOON AS THE WATERS CLOSE ABOVE NAMOR, SQUIDD HAS AN ODD REACTION TO ALL THIS!

HA! HA! HO! HEE! HA!

DEEP IN THE DEPTHS OF THE POOL, NAMOR SEES....

A-HA! SO *THIS* IS THE TRAP! MEN IN DIVING SUITS!

THERE HE IS! IT'S THE *SUB-MARINER! GET HIM!*

LET'S SKIP THE REST OF WHAT HAPPENS IN THE WATER AND WE'LL FOLLOW THE ADVENTURES OF MR. SQUIDD...

AH! IT WORKED PERFECTLY! NOW, WHILE MY MEN HOLD NAMOR DOWN THERE, I CAN GO AHEAD WITH THE REST OF MY SCHEME TO HOLDUP THE EXCURSION BOAT!

ALL SET, CHIEF? EVERYTHING GO OFF ALL RIGHT?

CERTAINLY! DIDN'T I PLAN IT? SUB-MARINER'S THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD STOP ME--AND HE'S MY PRISONER IN THE BOTTOM OF THE POOL! LET'S GO, MEN!

NOW IT'S TIME FOR US TO GO BACK TO THE BOTTOM OF THE POOL, WHERE WE'RE IN FOR A SURPRISE!

HEY! HE GAVE UP TOO EASILY! I DON'T LIKE THIS! IT'S NOT LIKE THE SUB-MARINER NOT TO PUT UP A FIGHT!

I'LL LET THESE BABIES THINK THEY'VE GOT ME--FOR A WHILE!

BUT SUDDENLY THERE IS VIOLENCE--LIKE THE EXPLOSION OF AN ATOM BOMB, AS NAMOR GOES INTO ACTION!

YEOW!

OOF!

CROOKS!

THE BATTLE IS BRIEF, BUT CONCLUSIVE!

COME ON, KIDDIES! YOUR BATH IS OVER! IT'S TIME FOR YOUR BEDTIME STORY, ONLY *YOU* WILL DO THE TELLING!

OUT OF THE WATER, ONE OF THE THUGS TALKS UNDER THREAT OF A THOROUGH DUCKING!

... AND IT WAS *SQUIDD'S* IDEA!

I *THOUGHT* SO! I'M TURNING YOU OVER TO THE POLICE--AND *THEN* I'LL TAKE CARE OF *MR. SQUID!*

MEANWHILE, SQUIDD AND HIS MEN HAVE COMPLETED THE HOLDUP OF THE EXCURSION SHIP AND ARE MAKING THEIR GETAWAY IN THEIR SPEEDBOAT...

EVERYTHING WENT *FINE!* JUST AS I PLANNED IT!

HEY, LOOK! DID YOU PLAN *THAT?*

YEOW! A TIDAL WAVE! AND IT'S COMING RIGHT AT US!

CAUSING THE GIGANTIC TIDAL WAVE IS NAMOR--KING OF THE DEEP!

THIS OUGHT TO PUT A HITCH INTO SQUIDD'S SCHEME!

HALP!

UP WE GO!

YEOW!

IT'S THE *SUB-MARINER!*

RIGHT, SQUIDD! *SURPRISED?*

NAMOR DRIVES THE TIDAL WAVE WITH THE BOAT ATOP IT TOWARD THE SHORE AND JUSTICE...

OHHH! WHY DID I *EVER* GO INTO CRIME?

DOESN'T PAY--DOES IT?

...AND THE SPEEDBOAT IS DRIVEN STRAIGHT INTO THE WAITING ARMS OF THE POLICE!

I GIVE UP! I GIVE UP! EVEN *PRISON* IS BETTER THAN *THIS!*

ME, TOO!

--AND ME!

YOU SEE, SQUIDD, YOU OVERLOOKED ONE THING--*AS LONG AS I'M IN THE WATER, NOBODY CAN BEAT ME!*

COME ON, SQUIDD! YOU AND YOUR MEN WILL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO THINK THIS OVER--*IN PRISON!*

THE END

RED UNIT

ANNIE OAKLEY
BLACKSTONE THE MAGICIAN
BLONDE PHANTOM
COMPLETE MYSTERY STORIES
CRIMEFIGHTERS ALWAYS WIN
GEORGIE
IDEAL COMICS
JOKER COMICS
JUSTICE
LAWBREAKERS ALWAYS LOSE
MARGIE
MARVEL MYSTERY COMICS
MILLIE THE MODEL
NAMORA
NELLIE THE NURSE
PATSY WALKER
SUB-MARINER
SUN GIRL
TEEN COMICS
TESSIE THE TYPIST
TEX MORGAN
TWO-GUN KID
WILD WESTERN
WILLIE

BLUE-YELLOW UNIT

ALL-TRUE CRIME CASES
ALL WINNERS
BLAZE CARSON
CAPTAIN AMERICA
CINDY
COMEDY COMICS
CRIME EXPOSED
FRANKIE
GAY COMICS
HEDY DE VINE
HUMAN TORCH
JEANIE
JUNIOR MISS
KID COLT
KRAZY KOMICS
LANA
MITZI
MY ROMANCE
OSCAR
POWERHOUSE PEPPER
RUSTY
SUPER RABBIT
TEX TAYLOR
THE WITNESS
VENUS
WACKY DUCK

MARVEL
COMIC GROUP

HI FRIENDS:

Lately there has been quite a debate about comics raging in the pages of the Saturday Review of Literature, one of America's most respected magazines. In an article, a Dr. Wertham discussed the problem of juvenile delinquency in America today, and pinned the blame for some of these cases on comic magazines, simply because many of the delinquent youngsters had read comics.

93% of all young people (from 8 to 16 years of age) read comics. Naturally a few young people get into some kind of trouble . . . so do a lot of older ones . . . and of course many of the kids who get into trouble do read comics. But what the article does not state is the fact that 93% of the boys and girls who get into *no trouble at all* also read comics.

Let us quote a letter from David Pace Wigransky, a 14 year old reader of comics, published in the July 24th issue of the Saturday Review:

". . . In none of these cases was it proved that reading comic books was the cause of the delinquency. A good many of the delinquents mentioned happened to be readers of comic magazines, just as are 69,999,975 perfectly healthy, happy, normal American boys and girls, men and women, who also read comics.

". . . It appears that his [Dr. Wertham's] $64 question to a child being psychoanalyzed is, 'Do you read COMIC BOOKS, my little man?' Of course the juvenile delinquent, *being a normal child in at least that way,* will answer 'Yes'."

In other words, the case is just as we stated it above. Since almost all kids of any kind read comics, naturally some of the delinquents read comics too. But since the same percentage holds true among the millions of youngsters who have committed *no offense at all,* why not give the comics credit for the good influence they have been on these millions of healthy, normal kids, instead of just blaming them for our handful of delinquents?

Once again let us remind you to show our magazines, or any of the other *good* comics, to people who criticize this form of entertainment. Show those people that your favorite magazines are not harmful. Let them see Dr. Thompson's endorsement on the first page of every one of our magazines, and prove to one and all that the comics you buy and read are *good for you.*

THE EDITORS
MARVEL COMIC GROUP

BLONDE PHANTOM

GIVE ME BACK THAT PURSE, CASPELLI! YES, I KNOW WHO YOU ARE-- YOU THIEF!

I SAW YOU STUFF THE LOOT I STOLE INTO THIS PURSE, BLONDE PHANTOM! YOU'LL NEVER INTERFERE WITH ME AGAIN!

I MIGHT HAVE MADE A MISTAKE! PERHAPS IT ISN'T CASPELLI WHOSE TIME IS UP-- PERHAPS IT'S...

SOMEONE'S TIME IS UP AND THE GRIM REAPER COMES DOWN TO EARTH TO LEAD THE DOOMED ONE TO ETERNAL SLEEP! BUT WHO HAS HE COME FOR? THIS IS THE QUESTION THE BLONDE PHANTOM ASKS HERSELF AS SHE FACES A DESPERATE KILLER'S GUN!

"DOOMED FOR DEATH!"

3997

A MISTY, MYSTERIOUS HAZE FALLS GENTLY OVER THE BLONDE PHANTOM'S MIND! SLOWLY SHE SEEMS TO DRIFT UPWARD, UPWARD! THE SMOKY VELVET FOG WISPS AWAY AND THE BLONDE PHANTOM FACES--FATHER TIME, THE GRIM REAPER!

YOU--YOU *DID* CALL FOR ME, FATHER TIME?

YES, MY DEAR! OF COURSE I DID! I HAVE A MOST *URGENT* MISSION TO ACCOMPLISH!

I-I GUESS WE ALL HAVE TO LEAVE SOME DAY-- BUT I DIDN'T THINK MY TIME WAS SO NEAR!

HO! HO! NO, MY DEAR, IT'S NOT *YOU!* THAT JADED MARTINET, GEORGE CASPELLI! HE'S ENJOYED HIS WANTON LIFE *LONG ENOUGH!*

GEORGE CASPELLI? BUT ***WHY?*** HE'S AN ***EMINENT CITIZEN*** AND A ***TRUSTEE*** OF THE ***FOUNDATION TRUST COMPANY!***

TRUE, HOWEVER, TWENTY YEARS AGO, HE WAS A GUN-CARRYING YOUNG DESPERADO! HE WAS ALMOST KILLED DURING A ROBBERY AND DECIDED TO GO STRAIGHT ***FOR A WHILE!*** WOULD YOU TRUST A MAN LIKE THAT WITH $250,000,000?

OH-H, I SEE! HE PLANS TO STEAL IT-- I HAD NO IDEA OF CASPELLI'S BACKGROUND-- BUT WHY HAVE YOU SENT FOR ME?

YOU, MY DEAR, ARE GOING TO ***HELP*** CASPELLI ON A JOURNEY TO THE ***PEARLY GATES*** WHERE WE'LL ALL BE WAITING FOR HIM-- I MUST GO NOW!

ME? BUT WHY--OH--HE'S ***VANISHED!*** GOOD GOSH! THIS IS LIKE AN ASSIGNMENT FROM HEAVEN! AND OH-H--MY LUNCH HOUR'S TEN MINUTES OVER! I'D BETTER GET BACK TO THE ***OFFICE!***

THE LOVELY BLONDE PHANTOM DISCARDS HER DISGUISE TO RETURN TO THE SEDENTARY ROLE OF MARK MASON'S SECRETARY...

... AND WHERE, OH, ***WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?***

KILLING TIME AT LUNCH, MARK! WHY THE GRIEF?

YEOW! LISTEN TO ME SCREAM! WITH MAYHEM BREAKING LOOSE AT THE FOUNDATION TRUST COMPANY AND MY LOWLY SECRETARY SEES FIT TO DOODLE HER TIME AWAY!

EH? ***FOUNDATION TRUST COMPANY?***

YEAH! ***GEORGE CASPELLI'S DISAPPEARED WITH A QUARTER OF A MILLION BUCKS WORTH OF CASH AND BONDS!***

THE GRIM BOY WAS RIGHT!

C'MON TIME-WASTER! YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE SOME NOTES AT THE FOUNDATION-- I'VE BEEN HIRED ALONG WITH ONE OF MY COMPETITORS-- WHOEVER FINDS CASPELLI GETS A ***FIVE GRAND REWARD*** AND THAT MEANS A ***SILVER FOX SCARF FOR YOU!***

MARK, YOU'RE POSITIVELY GENEROUS!

AT THE TRUST COMPANY'S OFFICE...

THIS WAS CASPELLI'S OFFICE -- OH, MR. MASON -- I BELIEVE YOU ***KNOW*** INVESTIGATOR FORREST!

YEAH! HI, JIM!

GREETINGS, MARK!

HELLO, LOUISE -- WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO QUIT THAT AMATEUR MASON AND COME TO WORK FOR ***ME?***

I'LL THINK IT OVER ON MY NEXT "LONG" LUNCH HOUR!

SUPPOSE WE COVER THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO THIS SWINDLE, MR. STONE!

ULP! WHO PUSHED ME?

UH-OH! -- I FEEL A BEARD -- IT MUST BE FATHER TIME!

YES, I COULDN'T RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO HELP YOU ALONG! TAKE A LOOK AT THAT CALENDAR ON THE WALL!

BER		
A	FRI	SAT
	1	2
7	8	9
4	(15)	16
1	22	23
8	29	30

HMMM... THERE'S A CIRCLE AROUND ***SEPTEMBER FIFTEENTH*** AND HERE UNDER IMPORTANT CELEBRATIONS IS LISTED THE ***NEW CITY MARDI GRAS!*** GEE, THANKS FOR THE CLUE, FATHER -- OH, HE'S ***GONE!***

3	4		
10	11	12	
17	18	19	2
24	25	26	27

SAY, SUGAR CUBE -- WHAT ARE YOU MAKING WITH THE MUMBLE ABOUT THAT CALENDAR?

NOTHING IMPORTANT! JUST REMINDING MYSELF THE ***SIXTEENTH IS MY BIRTHDAY!***

WITH FACTS AND FIGURES NOTED IN LOUISE'S BOOK, MARK AND HIS SECRETARY LEAVE -- SUDDENLY...

OH-H -- MARK! I FEEL SICK --

GEE, KID -- DON'T LET IT UPSET YOU SO! C'MON, I'LL TAKE YOU HOME! DON'T COME IN TOMORROW IF YOU STILL FEEL ILL!

LOUISE EFFECTS A MIRACULOUS RECOVERY THE MINUTE MARK LEAVES HER APARTMENT!

THAT WAS GOOD FAKING ON MY PART! NOW TO GET A PLANE RESERVATION TO ***NEW CITY!***

THE NEXT MORNING AT THE BUSTLING NEW CITY AIRPORT...

THERE MUST BE A ***MILLION*** CELEBRANTS IN NEW CITY--AND I'VE GOT TO FIND A ***PARTICULAR ONE!*** I GET THE EASY JOBS, DON'T I?

OH-OH! JIM FORREST WAS ON THE SECOND FLIGHT! HE MUSTN'T SEE ME--I'LL GET A TAXI AND SCOUT AROUND FOR HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS!

THE HOTEL HUNT PROVES FRUITLESS AND AT THE LAST HOTEL...

SORRY, MISS--YOU SHOULD HAVE WIRED FOR RESERVATIONS--NOT A ***ROOM AVAILABLE!***

OH, WELL, I HEAR THEY SUPPLY PILLOWS WITH THE BENCHES AT THE PARK THESE DAYS!

PARDON ME, MISS! I HAVE TWO SUITES.. ***TOO MANY*** ROOMS, REALLY! I'D BE HAPPY TO SUB-LEASE ONE OF THEM TO YOU!

WELL! WHAT GORGEOUS HOSPITALITY, THANK YOU!

IN THE ELEVATOR...

WHOOPS! JIM FORREST IS ON THE ELEVATOR AND HE GETS OFF THE SAME FLOOR WE DO! HE MUST'VE GOTTEN A RED HOT CLUE--OR DID HE SEE THE MARKING ON THAT CALENDAR TOO?

WHEW! HE DIDN'T SPOT ME! GOOD!

OUR SUITES ARE DOWN THE HALL, HERE!

THIS IS IT, MISS! MY NAME'S TUSCAN, AND IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO JUST CALL! AND NOW THERE'S THE BELLHOP TAKING YOUR THINGS INTO YOUR ROOM!

IT'S A LOVELY SUITE, MR. TUSCAN, I'M DEEPLY GRATEFUL! I THINK I'D BETTER UNPACK NOW!

SWELL GUY, THAT MR. TUSCAN!

EH? WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY ABOUT GEORGE CASPELLI?

HUH--OH! FATHER TIME! DID YOU SAY *HE* IS *CASPELLI?*

WELL, I WOULDN'T BE TOO HASTY IN SAYING SO -- BUT SUPPOSE YOU BE THE JUDGE!

LET'S ENTER CASPELLI'S ROOM!

YOUR HOST HAS LEFT TO GET SOME CIGARS--SO WE'RE SAFE--PUT A CHAIR ON TOP OF THAT TABLE AND LOOK INTO THAT LIGHT FIXTURE!

SURE!

IN CASPELLI'S ROOM...

WHOO! WHAT A CROP OF *CASH* AND BUNDLE OF *BONDS!* IT'S CASPELLI, ALL RIGHT!

I'VE GIVEN YOU ALL THE HELP I'M ALLOWED! FROM HERE ON YOU WILL SEE IT THROUGH *ALONE!* GOOD LUCK, MY DEAR!

THANKS, FATHER TIME! I'D BETTER GET BACK TO MY ROOM!

JUST AS SHE'S CROSSING THE ROOM, CASPELLI ENTERS...

OH, MISS GRANT!

OUCH! HE MUST'VE SPOTTED ME LEAVING HIS ROOM!

THE BIG COSTUME PARADE IS IN THE SPOTLIGHT TONIGHT, I WONDER IF I COULD BE SO BOLD AS TO OFFER MY SERVICES AS YOUR **ESCORT**? I'VE A NOVEL COSTUME!

OH- SURE, MR. TUSCAN! I'VE QUITE A COSTUME TOO! I'LL BE READY ABOUT **EIGHT!**

'LATER...

MY, WHAT A **UNIQUE OUTFIT!**

I MAY SAY **YOURS** IS EXTREMELY BECOMING!

AS CASPELLI AND THE BLONDE PHANTOM LEAVE THE SUITE, A PAIR OF INQUISITIVE EYES SCANS THE COSTUMED PAIR...

GREAT GUNS! FOR A MINUTE I THOUGHT IT WAS THE **BLONDE PHANTOM**- IT'S ONLY A COSTUME, I KNOW, YET...

WILL YOU WAIT HERE A MINUTE, MR. TUSCAN? I FORGOT MY PURSE AND COSMETICS!

CERTAINLY. AFTER ALL, WHAT'S A WOMAN WITHOUT POWDER!

DARTING BACK INTO CASPELLI'S ROOM, THE BLONDE PHANTOM HURRIES...

I WANT THE EVIDENCE WITH MAMA WHEN SHE TURNS HIS BLACK-HEARTED NIBS OVER TO THE LAW DEPARTMENT!

BUT CASPELLI HAS A STREAK OF SUSPICION AND...

WHAT A **COMPLETE SUCKER** I WAS, TRUSTING THAT DAME! I'LL PLAY ALONG-- THEN-- HA-HA!

WITH THE SECURITIES HIDDEN IN HER PURSE, THE BLONDE PHANTOM REJOINS CASPELLI! THEY LEAVE THE HOTEL TO FADE INTO THE RIOT OF REVELRY AND CARNIVALMANIA CONGESTING THE STREETS...

LOOKS LIKE THE BEGINNING OF A GAY EVENING!

YES, AND A FAT PRISON SENTENCE FOR YOU, TUSCAN!

WHEE!

THIS DIN IS GIVING ME A TERRIFIC HEADACHE-- I KNOW A NICE *QUIET* *CAFE* OFF THE MAIN STREET! CARE TO GO?

JUST LEAD-- I'LL FOLLOW!

THERE'S A SHORTCUT THROUGH THIS ALLEYWAY!

I DON'T LIKE THIS!

AND NOW YOU CAN STOP PLAYING ME FOR A SAP! *HAND OVER THOSE BONDS, AND THE MONEY IN YOUR PURSE!*

HE KNOWS!

I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TAKE THEM FROM--OOOH!

THE ONLY THING *YOU'LL* GET, CASPELLI, IS *GARBAGE!*

WHY YOU-- *GIMME THAT BAG!*

YOU KNOW EXACTLY *TOO MUCH!* SOMETHING TELLS ME YOU TAILED ME DOWN HERE BUT YOU'RE NEVER GOING BACK!

THE GREAT BIG BRAVE BUM! HUH-LOOKS LIKE FATHER TIME WAS WRONG! *I'M* THE ONE WHO'S GOING TO BE KNOCKING AT THE *PEARLY GATES* IN ABOUT SEVEN SECONDS!

THE SECOND BEFORE CASPELLI SQUEEZES THE TRIGGER OF HIS WEAPON, THREE SHOTS BLAZE OUT ABOVE THE CARNIVAL CACOPHONY...

BAM! BAM! BAM!

YA-GHH!

JIM FORREST! HE FOLLOWED US!

HEY, BLONDE PHANTOM -- WAIT!

HE'S YOUR COOKIE NOW!

I'M GONNA SCRAM BEFORE FORREST RECOGNIZES ME!

PHEW! GUESS JIM CAN TAKE CARE OF WHAT'S LEFT OF CASPELLI! OH-OH-- THERE'S FATHER TIME, AND I THOUGHT HE...

LEND ME A HANDKERCHIEF, SYLVIA-- I'M PERSPIRING MADLY UNDER THIS GET-UP!

SURE, DEAR, HERE!

OH--I GUESS HE REALLY WENT BACK "UP THERE"-- NOW THAT CASPELLI IS DEAD!

THE BLONDE PHANTOM MAKES A HURRIED FLIGHT HOME THAT NIGHT AND THE NEXT MORNING AT MASON'S OFFICE...

YIPES, LOUISE! JIM FORREST KILLED CASPELLI AT NEW CITY--RECOVERED THE SECURITIES AND ALL BECAUSE OF A CLUE HE SPOTTED ON THAT CALENDAR YOU WERE STARING AT IN THE FOUNDATION OFFICE!

OH, MARK-- THAT PUTS YOU OUT OF THE PICTURE!

YEAH--I MUFFED THIS ONE GOOD! FORREST SENT THIS BOX--A GIFT FOR YOU!

OH--I WAS KIDDING HIM THAT TODAY WAS MY BIRTHDAY!

GULLIVER! A SILVER FOX FUR PIECE, NO LESS! THE NERVE OF THAT GUY FORREST! FIRST HE STEALS THE CASE RIGHT OUT FROM UNDER MY NOSE AND NOW HE GIVES YOU THE PRESENT I WAS SUPPOSED TO GIVE!

TSK, TSK, MARK! DO I SUSPECT A HINT OF JEALOUSY IN THAT MANLY VOICE OF YOURS?

THE END

DON'T MISS...

...THESE AMAZING, ACTION-PACKED CASES OF YOUR POLICE DEPARTMENT'S RELENTLESS FIGHT AGAINST THE UNDER-WORLD!

APRIL NO. 9 10¢

JUSTICE SMASHES THE GANGSTERS!

ONE OF THE LETHAL GUNS SLIPPED FROM JOHNNY'S BULLET-SMASHED FINGERS! HIS EYES FOLLOWED IT DOWN, AS IT HIT THE FLOOR WITH A THUD!

YOU--YOU DIRTY DOG! I'LL FIX YOU--FIX YOU **GOOD!** LET GO OF MY FOOT! TAKE THAT, YOU...

PAPA!

OW-W-W!

BUT THE OLD MAN WASN'T THROUGH YET! HE STIRRED AND MOANED AND THE OLD, TOIL-WORN HAND REACHED OUT AGAIN--THIS TIME FOR THE GUN THAT JOHNNY SANCHICO HAD DROPPED!

OH, PAPA! WHAT DID HE **DO** TO YOU?

HERE IS A BLOOD-DRENCHED PAGE TORN FROM THE VICIOUS LIFE OF JOHNNY "THE GUN" SANCHICO! EVERY VIOLENT, SMASHING, BULLET-RIDDEN HOUR--EVERY HEADLINE THAT SCREAMED THE TRUTH ABOUT ONE OF THE MOST VICIOUS CRIMINALS OF OUR TIME--

IN THIS ISSUE!

C'MON, C'MON, WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR?

THE OLD MAN--HE CAME TO AND GRABBED ME BY THE ANKLE! BUT I FIXED HIM--I KICKED HIS HEAD IN!

OKAY, FOLLER ME!

GO AHEAD! OW-W-W! **MY LEG!** THAT OLD--HERE, QUICK, MONK--SHUT THAT DAME UP, AND GIMME A HAND!

HELP! POLICE! POLICE!

NUTS! I **TOLD** YOU TO TAKE CARE OF THOSE TWO! THAT NOISE WAS ENOUGH TO WAKE THE DEAD! YOU'RE ON YOUR **OWN**, KID! I'M GETTIN' OUTTA HERE! S'LONG, JOHNNY!

WAIT! YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME LIKE **THIS! MONK**--**WAIT!** WHY, YOU **DIRTY, TWO-TIMING RAT!** YOU...

SHOP

THROW THAT GUN AWAY, PUNK, OR WE'LL SHOOT YOU FULL OF HOLES!

OKAY, COPPERS, YOU GOT ME--**THIS** TIME! BUT THERE'LL BE ANOTHER TIME, AND THE **NEXT** TIME I'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO! YES, SIR, **I'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO!**

THE STORY THAT ONLY **WE** DARE TO PRINT!

GET YOUR COPY TODAY!

NOW! A GENUINE PORTABLE RADIO BUILT INTO A GIANT PHONE!

MADE ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN!

DIAL A STATION · PROGRAMS COME THRU' RECEIVER!

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VOLUME CONTROL

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- Beautiful plastic telephone case.
- Facotry Guarantee against defects of material or workmanship.

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COMPLETE WITH AERIAL!

Now Junior can listen to serials and mysteries without disturbing anyone. Sister can listen to her favorite programs while mother listens to another radio. It's really a child's very own. The telephone "dial" is really a carefully preset, highly selective radio dial. Brings in any station within a 100 mile radius. Tuned for every radio frequency from 540 to 1600 kilocycles. Includes all the features of expensive portables.

This sensational new radio is complete in every detail. Includes its own tube and a special, easily attached aerial that brings in programs with plenty of volume. There are no "extras" to buy. Your RADIOPHONE comes to you complete. Any child will reap rich benefits from having his own radio. For education, amusement, and rainy-day entertainment, there's nothing like a RADIOPHONE for keeping every youngster occupied. These perfectly engineered radios are available in limited supply—so mail the coupon today. Satisfaction guaranteed.

SEND NO MONEY. MAIL HANDY COUPON TODAY.

only $4.98

Plus 11¢ for NEW POWERHOUSE LONG LASTING BATTERIES

ORDER YOURS TODAY! SEND NO MONEY

Just Think! A GENUINE SWISS MUSIC BOX in a REAL DOLL'S CRADLE!

THE LULLABYE CRADLE THAT PLAYS "BABY LULLABYE"!

$5.98 COMPLETE!

Gently rock the cradle and you hear the beautiful tones of a famous old lullabye. The genuine Swiss music box was hand crafted and hand tuned by Swiss craftsmen, famous for their work through the entire world. The music box is carefully made and hidden in the cradle. A small key at the bottom of the cradle winds the music box—it plays over and over. This lovely cradle is trimmed with a cute animal. The inside of the cradle is just waiting for a baby doll to rest on its very own plastic air mattress, sheets and pillow. Any girl will love playing mother with this exceptional toy. 17" long, the cradle stands 9" high, just the right size for a baby doll.

NO OTHER TOY GIVES A CHILD SO MUCH!

- Helps to give a real understanding of music
- Perfect for rainy-day play
- Hand fashioned, durable construction
- Satisfaction guaranteed against defects
- Genuine Swiss music box, hand crafted—hand tuned

Prudential Sales Co., Dept. M.C.
141 Broadway, New York 6, N.Y.

☐ Please send me immediately the CHILD'S PORTABLE RADIOPHONE with batteries. I will pay 4.98 and 1.00 for batteries plus C.O.D postage.

☐ Please rush me a GENUINE SWISS MUSIC BOX IN A REAL DOLL'S CRADLE. I will pay 5.98 plus C.O.D. postage.

☐ Check or Money Order (We pay postage)

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Address.....

City.....Zone.....State.....

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Retail $13.80 . . . Your Cost, $5.00

72	Blockbuster Salutes	3.50
1	Buzz Bomb	.35
32	8" Gold Sparklers	.40
160	Chinese Firecrackers	1.50
6	Black Snakes	.15
50	2" Salutes	1.00
1	Triangle Wheel	.35
4	Colored Sky Rockets	1.00
350	Chinese Ladycrackers	.50
3	Colored Roman Candles	.75
1	3 Shot Bomb	.30
2	Handle Fountains	FREE
	Plus 12 night items	4.00
	Regular Retail Price	$13.80

USE COUPON Your Cost Just . . $5.00

Gigantic All Noise Ass't!

Retail $23.02 . . . Your Cost, $10.00

144	Bulldog Salutes	4.32
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100	2" Flash Salutes	2.00
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2	9 Shot Repeat Bombs	2.00
2	No. 4 Aerial Bombs	1.00
2	Whistling Repeat Bombs	.50
160	Chinese Firecrackers	1.50
2	Whistling Fliers	.30
2	3 Shot Repeat Bombs	.60
4	Spangle Bombs	.60
1	5 Shot Repeat Bomb	.50
1	No. 3 Aerial Flash Bomb	FREE
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50	2" Salutes	1.00
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Save More Than ½ YOUR MAIL PRICE . . . $4.95

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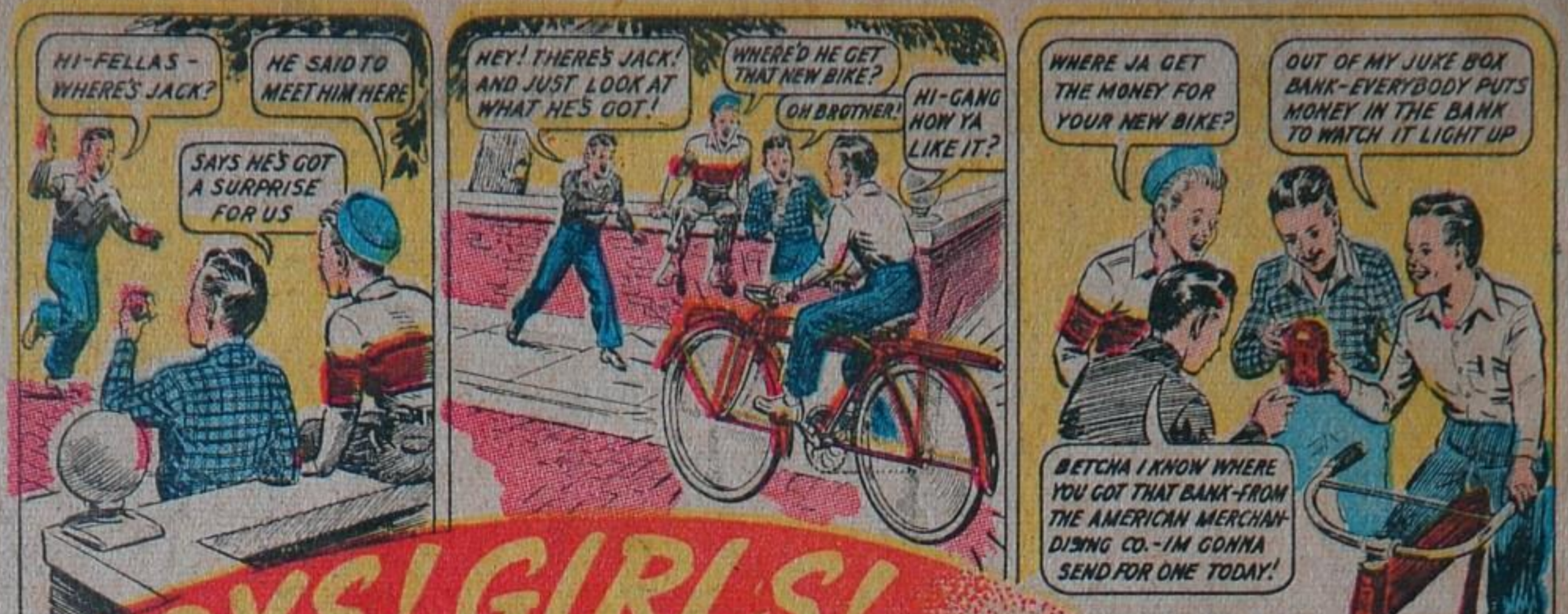
HI-FELLAS - WHERE'S JACK?
HE SAID TO MEET HIM HERE
SAYS HE'S GOT A SURPRISE FOR US
HEY! THERE'S JACK! AND JUST LOOK AT WHAT HE'S GOT!
WHERE'D HE GET THAT NEW BIKE?
OH BROTHER!
HI-GANG HOW YA LIKE IT?
WHERE JA GET THE MONEY FOR YOUR NEW BIKE?
OUT OF MY JUKE BOX BANK-EVERYBODY PUTS MONEY IN THE BANK TO WATCH IT LIGHT UP
BETCHA I KNOW WHERE YOU GOT THAT BANK-FROM THE AMERICAN MERCHANDISING CO.-IM GONNA SEND FOR ONE TODAY!

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Make Money with Your Own JUKE BOX BANK

WATCH YOUR SAVINGS MOUNT UP LIKE MAGIC...

Friends and Relatives will Help You Save! Just see how it works!

You'll see those nickels and dimes add up to mighty dollar bills with this new Juke Box Bank that's a gay plastic reproduction of the tuneful Juke Box down at the corner Soda Fountain. Bring it out at parties or when company comes to call. The coins and currency will really pour in, because *everyone* wants to see it light up electrically and flash its bit of advice: "It's Wise To Be Thrifty"—to which we might add: it's *easy* to be thrifty when you have an attention-getting, fun-producing Juke Box Bank.

It's Wise To Be Thrifty
$1.98 Post Paid Complete With Battery & Bulb
Put Your Coins in Slot and Press-in!
JUKE BOX BLAZES WITH LIGHT AS IT FLASHES:
It's Wise to be Thrifty

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SEND NO MONEY: Send only your name and address. Then pay postman only $1.98 plus postage. If you are not delighted, return within 10 days for speedy cheerful refund.

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Name .....

Address .....

City & Zone.....State.....

2nd Choice Color.....

Check..... Money Order..... C.O.D. (plus postage).....

(We prepay postage if full payment accompanies order)

SENT ON APPROVAL—SEND NO MONEY

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COLORS:
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Wine
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TRY THIS:

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